GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3985
ANSWERED ON:19.04.2000
ISI ROLE
ABDUL HAMID;BHIM PRASAD DAHAL;C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned `ISI fomenting terrorism in Assam, says U.S. State Dept` appearing in the Times of India` dated March 11, 2000;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d) whether this matter was discussed with U.S. President, Bill Clinton;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reason therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA)

(a) Yes, Sir. Government has seen the news item referred to in Part [a] of the question.

(b) The news item is based on a report that appeared in a US newspaper, the Washington Times on 10th March. The US newspaper quotes an unnamed US State Department official as saying that the ISI is helping the militants in Assam.

(c) Government takes every opportunity to draw the attention of the international community to Pakistan`s support and sponsorship of cross-border terrorism in India. Government has also initiated co-operation with a number of countries on measures to combat terrorism. A Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism has been set up with the United States to intensify co-operation in this area. There is growing international recognition of Pakistan`s support and sponsorship of cross-border terrorism in India, as evidenced in the above quoted report.

(d) Yes, Sir. Regional issues, including the problem of cross-border terrorism, were discussed with President Clinton during his visit to India.

(e) The two sides expressed their determination to intensify co-operation in combating terrorism. President Clinton acknowledged that there are elements within the Pakistani Government that have supported those engaged in violence in Kashmir. He also asked Pakistan to help create conditions for a bilateral dialogue with India to succeed.

(f) Does not arise.